

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02

STR-04 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AGR-05

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-06 /113 W

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R 261643Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5989

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC GENEVA

USDEL MTN GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3147

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, EAID, ECIN, EEC, EG, JO, SY, LE, IS, IT

SUBJ: GOI VIEWS ON EC-MASHRAQ NEGOTIATIONS

REF: EC BRUSSELS 1015, EC BRUSSELS 1434

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1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED INITIAL ROUND OF EC-MASHRAQ NEGOTIATIONS

WITH MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) REP STEA-AHTONINI (CHIEF, EC EXTERNAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, VICE PENNAROLA) IN ORDER ASCERTAIN GOI REACTION. STEA-ANTONINI MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. MASHRAQ COUNTRIES OBVIOUSLY UNWILLING CONCLUDE AGREEMENTS WITH EC WHICH DO NOT PROVIDE FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS TRADE CONCESSIONS. ALTHOUGH EC COMMISSION'S PRESENT MANDATE DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, THIS QUESTION WILL BE REEXAMINED AND, EVENTUALLY, THE COUNCIL WILL REVISE COMMISSION'S MANDATE TO INCLUDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

B. ISRAEL EXPECTS SIMILAR TREATMENT IF EC-MASHRAQ AGREEMENTS INCLUDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. ISRAELI EMBASSY ROME HAS ALREADY APPROACHED MFA IN THIS REGARD. CONSEQUENTLY, EVENHANDED APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST BY EC WILL REQUIRE REVISION OF EC-ISRAEL AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

C. EC-MASHRAQ AGREEMENTS SHOULD POSE NO SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS FOR ITALIAN AGRICULTURE, SINCE MASHRAQ COUNTRIES ARE NOT MAJOR PRODUCERS OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS WHICH GOI CONSIDERS "SENSITIVE."

2. COMMENT. DESPITE STEA-ANTONINI'S DISCLAIMER RE POSSIBLE PROBLEMS FOR ITALIAN AGRICULTURE, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT, AS NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED, MINISTRY AGRICULTURE WILL SHOW, IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURES FROM ITALIAN PRODUCERS, INCREASING CONCERN OVER PREFERENTIAL ACCESS TO EC OF INTER ALIA OLIVE OIL. CITRUS FRUIT MAY NOT BE A MAJOR PROBLEM, GIVEN RELATIVELY IMPORTANCE OF MASHRAQ COUNTRIES AS PRODUCERS. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PREFERENTIAL TARIFFS, TRADE AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME03147
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760073-0807
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760210/aaaaahts.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 EC BRUSSELS 1015, 76 EC BRUSSELS 1434
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <29 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOI VIEWS ON EC-MASHRAQ NEGOTIATIONS
TAGS: ETRD, EAID, ECIN, EG, JO, SY, LE, IS, IT, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006